

# Presence of God

## **ADAM AND EVE: Genesis 3:1-19**

When Eve was subjected to the very first temptation to disobey God's initial command, her tempter, the serpent (devil), proved to be crafty enough to deceive her into committing the first transgression (Look at 2 Corinthians 11:3 and 1 Timothy 2:14). But her sin was not the product of careful, deliberate thought based on truth. Deception always appeals rather to untruth and half-truth, both equally dangerous and something the serpent had (and has) in great abundance.

What was perhaps the most potent deception of the serpent that made disobedience to God attractive to Eve? "You won't die if you eat the forbidden fruit because God is just using the threat of death on you so you won't eat the fruit and have the same knowledge of good and evil that He has. He doesn't want to share His knowledge with you. He doesn't want to share anything good with you" (paraphrase of Genesis 3:4-5). What was Eve's last observation before she actually ate of the fruit? That it was (from) "a tree **desirable to make one wise**....(Genesis 3:6).

So when Eve, and then Adam ate of the fruit forbidden by God, they were surely looking for knowledge that they were deceived into thinking was equal to that of God even though it came from a source other than God.

After Adam and Eve sinned by eating of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, they immediately knew something about themselves that they had not previously known...that they were naked (Genesis 3:7). This new knowledge was a direct result of eating the forbidden fruit because they both had been naked since their respective creations, yet without shame (Genesis 2:25). The shame of their nakedness was not present until immediately after their sin and its illicit knowledge.

The reaction of Adam and Eve to their new situation as sinners with something to hide was to make aprons of fig leaves to cover their nakedness and to hide themselves from the presence of God among the trees (Genesis 3:7-8). When God found them in the garden, He interrogated them so that they revealed to God that their nakedness caused them to hide from Him. God knew that their knowledge of nakedness did not come from Him but from their eating the fruit (Genesis 3:8-11).

For their sin, both Adam and Eve and the serpent were punished heavily. The penalties are listed in Genesis 3:12-19. Look at this reference and list those penalties.

## **MOSES: Exodus 2,2,33**

If it can be said that Adam and Eve represent all of us when we sin and, because of our guilt and shame, hide from the presence of the Lord; then Moses represents those (a significantly smaller number) who have learned the importance of seeking to live in God's presence at all times regardless of circumstances.

Moses was a Hebrew born in Egypt (Exodus 2:1-10). Later, when Moses was an adult and had killed an Egyptian, he found it necessary to leave Egypt because the king of Egypt attempted to kill him (Exodus 2:11-15). Moses fled to the land of Midian, where he married into the family of Jethro (also called Reuel), the priest of Midian (Exodus 2:15-21).

When Moses was tending Jethro's flock, he eventually took the flock to Horeb (Sinai), "the mountain of God" (Exodus 3:1). It is here that the story of Moses (as we know him), really began. Until this time, he had never heard the voice of God but all of that changed through his encounter with God on Horeb.

God first caught Moses' attention with the bush that burned but was not consumed and then identified Himself to Moses, calling him to go before Pharaoh in order to deliver His people out of Egypt (Exodus 3:2-10). Moses reluctantly obeyed God's calling on his life and because the deliverer that God prepared him to be.

As he led the people of Israel out of the reach of the Egyptian army and away from any captive influence, Moses learned quickly how important it was to live in the presence of God – especially as the top leader of probably more than 2 million people. People who complained about everything.

There was one incident involving the sin of the people in making and worshipping the golden calf that best illustrates Moses' burning desire to live in God's presence, even if it might cost him greatly. After the matter of punishment of the people's idolatry was concluded, God told Moses to take the people to the Land of Promise, with only His angel to lead them – no longer Himself as their leader (Exodus 33:1-3). A little later, Moses spoke very candidly with God, asking Him "...that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight" (Exodus 33:13). God replied: "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest" (Exodus 33:14). Then he (Moses) said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here" (Exodus 33:15). Moses concluded his argument by emphasizing the following: "For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us?" (Exodus 33:16) God finally answered Moses' request for grace in God's sight and the confidence that God really knew his name by saying: "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name" (Exodus 33:17). By this it was known that God's presence would go with Moses and the Israelites.

If Moses had not objected for the right reasons to God's order to take the people of Israel to the Land of Promise without Him, Moses knew that both he and the people would fall out of grace with God. But he was even more concerned that He would not be able to live in God's presence. His overriding desire above all other desires was to live in the Presence of the Lord. No compromise!

**CONCLUSION:**

If we are not desperate for God's presence now, when we can do something about it, we will be eternally desperate for His presence later on, when we cannot do anything about it.

How about you? How desperate are you for Him?